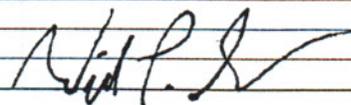


5000 Colorado Field Ornithologists Sight Record Form

(Please print or type. Attach photographs and additional pages if necessary.)

ACCEPTED

Each table cell will automatically enlarge as you type!

CFO-RC FILE X: 2002-123		
RESULTS:		
Species:(Common Name) Purple Finch		(Scientific Name) <i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>
Date(s) of occurrence: 12/09/02		
Number of birds seen: 1	Sex: ?	Plumage: Female/1 st Winter Male (eastern)
Exact location: S.W. Corner of Community Gardens, Near North Boulder Community Center		
County: Boulder	Nearest town: Boulder	Elevation: ~5300 feet
Length of observation: About 2 minutes		Time(s) of observation: Approx. 12:00 p.m.
Other observers who saw the bird(s) with you: Another birder saw the bird with me, but I didn't get his name.		
Other Observers who independently saw the bird(s): Chris Wood		
Light Conditions (quality; direction relative to bird(s); position: Bright sunlight, bird in dappled light of tree branches.		
Optical equipment used: Minox 8.5 X 42 binoculars		
Distance from bird(s) (estimated unless otherwise noted): The bird was about 10 meters away in a tree.		
Was bird(s) photographed? no	If so, have you submitted photos	
Who took the photographs?		
Describe the general and specific habitat in which the bird(s) occurred: The bird was in a Russian olive tree on the edge of an open area (Community Gardens) to the northeast, and a residential area with mature trees to the south and west. Many neighborhood houses have bird feeders.		
Describe the bird's behavior (flying, feeding, habits, behaviors used in identifying the Species or in supporting the identification): I spotted the bird in the tree along with a Dark-eyed Junco. The bird sat for a few minutes and then flew into the neighborhood to the south.		
Describe the bird in detail. This is the most important part of this report. Include the overall size and shape and how you placed the bird in the general group that you did. Give complete details of plumage, including head, throat, undersides, nape, back, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to marks you used to identify the bird(s). Describe other important details, such as color and shape of bill, legs, eye, (etc.) that were important in making the identification. (Fill out this portion even if photographs are submitted; you may attach additional sheets, drawings, field sketches or copy field notes): I was immediately struck by the facial and breast pattern of this bird. Although similar in size to the junco, the head and breast pattern looked similar to a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Not expecting a Purple Finch, this initially confused me. However, the small size and bill convinced me that I was dealing with a finch. The bill was a stout and very triangular, and the markings on the head were distinct, with alternating brownish crown, white supercillium, brownish auriculars, and whitish malars. The leading edge of the malars was defined by a very dark lateral throat stripe. Overall, the head pattern was extremely well defined and contrasting, unlike other finch species I have observed. The breast was nearly white, with contrasting thick dark streaking. The streaks looked like they were made of interconnected spots that "ran together", creating thinner and thicker parts of each streak. I didn't see the back of the bird well, as it was above me in the tree. The wings were brownish, and other details didn't strike me at the time, as I was focusing on the unexpected head and breast patterns.		
Describe bird's call or song: Not heard.		
Discuss similar species and how you eliminated them: The bird's size and bill shape suggested that it was a finch. Female/1 st year male House Finches lack the boldly contrasting breast and head pattern seen on this bird. Female/1 st year male Cassin's Finches have strongly contrasting breast patterns similar to this bird, but the streaks are thinner and don't vary much in thickness throughout the streak like this bird's. Also, Cassin's Finches don't have the alternating, contrasting light/dark pattern on the head like this bird did.		
What is your prior experience with this and similarly appearing species? I've observed and photographed female/1 st year male Purple Finches extensively at feeders in Wisconsin. I have a constant stream of House Finches at my feeders, and have observed numerous Cassin's Finches in Colorado and Utah.		
List books, guides, recordings or other sources consulted and how this influenced your identification (during and after observation): After the observation I consulted The Sibley Guide to Birds and Photographs I've taken of Wisconsin Purple Finches.		
This report is from notes made during and after observation.		
Date of written report: 1/9/03		Signature: 
Reporting observer: William P. Schmoker		
Reporting Observer's Address: 3381 Larkspur Dr.		
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Phone: 303/702-9589 email: bill.schmoker@bvds.k12.co.us		